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Washington, D.C. 20231

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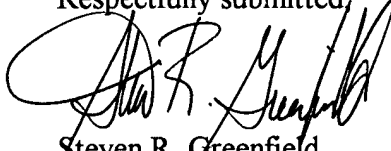
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In accordance with Applicants' duty under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 and 1.97, Applicants hereby submit the attached form PTO-1449, (modified) which lists art cited. The art listed therein, while of some relevance, is not necessarily considered to teach or suggest any aspect of the invention described and claimed in the above-identified patent application. This statement is also not to be construed as a representation that a search has, or has not, been conducted or that no better art exists. Rather, this statement discloses only the best art of which Applicants are aware.

In considering the art set forth below, it may be noted by the Examiner that certain references may contain markings, underlinings or other notations. These markings or notations are not to be construed as drawing the Examiner's attention either to selected parts or away from other parts of the references. Any such markings were either present on the copies of the references obtained by Applicants, or were made thereon during the study of the references by the Applicants and/or Applicants' Attorneys.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider each of the cited references, indicate such consideration by initialing each reference on the enclosed Form PTO-1449 (modified) and return a copy of the same with the next communication to the Applicants. For the convenience of the Examiner in considering the references, copies of the cited references are enclosed with this communication.

Respectfully submitted,



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